PROTECTED ADVICE TO MINISTERS
REVISED DRAFT FOR COMMENT

February 12~~1~~, 2022

Proposal: Trucker Protest Engagement

Objective: De-escalate and encourage people to leave unlawful protests

Principles:

- Coordinate effectively with police, based on their advice (see Annex)
- Provide a venue for the airing of grievances without compromising the government's position ~~Listen and explain the government's position – NO negotiation~~

Process & Timing

- Upon agreement to the proposal, provide police liaison in writing a commitment to government engagement at a later date that could be shared in meetings with protest leaders
- Police liaison to bring to ongoing engagement with protest leaders, seek rapid response
- The ~~deal~~ proposal would be: have supporters outside of the leadership group leave the protest immediately and denounce unlawful activity nationally. Encourage a period of quiet (no unlawful, unpeaceful, unsafe protests) between time of acceptance of the proposal until the meeting takes place, and you will be heard
- After the meeting takes place, the leadership should leave the city.
- In Ottawa, target Sunday, February 13 as the expected surge abates

Letter Signatory and Representation Options

- Recommended: Senior official(s) from the federal [and provincial] government representing public order and health policy
- Independent representative of the federal government, e.g. former Minister
- Political representation: unelected official from PMO or Minister
- A lead, impartial, liaison expert to be present to ensure constructive communication occurs.

Considerations

- Engagement creates room for peaceful disbursement, before enforcement action is taken, and supports enforcement by evidencing other options have been tried.

Annex: General Police Advice – from OPP

- Demonstrator Considerations
  - Identifying leaders who are compliant and have the ability to lead people from the protest.
  - Police liaison, such as the PLT, play a key role in helping organisers, at the local level, identify these people and aid them in keeping the protests lawful, peaceful and safe if that is the organisers' goal. During this period police focus on conducting law enforcement, whenever possible and practicable, to re-assure the general public and protesters. ~~In Ottawa specifically, police have identified several leaders who are willing to engage with police.~~
- Governmental Considerations
  - **Police are unable to solve the underlying issues**. There is very limited capacity for police to solve this situation, without some movement by government to allow demonstrators to have a "win" of sorts.
  - Recent rail line blockades and pipeline protests saw face to face meetings with government officials **providing an exit strategy** for the majority of demonstrators, which left the fringe/extremist elements isolated with diminished support.
  - While it may not provide an immediate solution and may ultimately be a check box of sorts, it creates a much better operational climate for the majority to move on and police to deal with criminality from fringe elements.
  - During this period it is also an excellent time to deploy police liaison resources in sufficient numbers to talk to protest participants about the potential consequences of their actions, identify the leaders of the movement and their motivations, while providing time and space to plan, if required.
- Exit Strategy Considerations
  - Explore non-policing conflict resolution options - Any enforcement action will likely result in sympathetic protests/blocks of roads.
  - ~~Perhaps a health Canada official address the science that Omicron numbers have, it will likely relieve the pressure, and the passion to remain might dwindle.~~
  - ~~Would~~ Aa meeting with government officials could assist.~~?~~ ~~Could~~ Liaison officers could provide proof (email?) to leaders that if they denounce ongoing actions ~~in Ottawa~~ they will meet with government officials.~~?~~ Have police issue warnings that anyone left demonstrating unlawfully, unpeacefully or unsafely will be arrested and or charged.
- Success for Police
  - **Local issues may have national or international impacts** – if enforcement is not done in a thoughtful manner there may be larger impacts elsewhere
  - ~~This is bigger than the situation in Ottawa, coordinated police **messaging and action should occur in a unified manner**. Police are often bound by services and borders, while demonstrators are not~~
  - Set demonstrators up for success
  - Ensure to keep police leaders informed
  - **Provide proactive messaging to control policing narrative** – throughout the cycle of conflict
  - **Exhaust all ability for effective communication** with demonstrators prior to enforcement